

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6881
INFO AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY LISBON
ALL EC CAPITALS 0229
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL BORDEAUX

S E C R E T PARIS 32953

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR SP FR
SUBJECT: ELYSEE ON KING JUAN CARLOS VISIT TO FRANCE

REF: (A) MADRID 8273; (B) MADRID 8180

1. ELYSEE INTERNATIONAL STAFFER WHO WAS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED KING'S VISIT HAS GIVEN US FOLLOWING IMPRESSIONS OF SUBSTANTIVE RESULTS' PROBABLY BASED ON GISCARD'S STAFF BRIEFING AFTER VISIT:

2. ON INTERNAL SPANISH PROBLEMS, SOURCE SAYS KING IS NOT "COMPLETELY CERTAIN" THAT CORTES WILL PASS THE PROPOSED REFORMS. THE CRUCIAL ISSUE WILL BE WHAT KING WILL DO IF IT DOES NOT. FRENCH THINK HE WOULD PROMPTLY DISSOLVE CORTES AND CALL FOR REFERENDUM. EVIDENTLY KING'S ELYSEE CONVERSATIONS, INsofar AS THEY HAVE BEEN REPORTED BY GISCARD TO HIS IMMEDIATE STAFF, SUGGEST THAT THE KING MAY STILL BE STRUGGLING WITH THIS CONTINGENCY PROBLEM. SOURCE UNDERLINED AT SAME TIME THAT GISCARD WAS RECONFIRMED BY VISIT IN HIS VIEW OF KING AS "INTELLI-SECRET

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GENT, COURAGEOUS AND PROGRESSIVE LEADER, HEDGED BY

ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS WHICH WERE DESIGNED TO FRUSTRATE CHANGE."

3. DISCUSSIONS DURING VISIT EVIDENTLY ALSO TOUCHED ON EVENTUAL LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS IN WHICH KING SEEMED TO FAVOR STRAIGHTFORWARD "MAJORITY" APPROACH AND NOT PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION. ELYSEE ASSUMES, HOWEVER, THAT OUTCOME WILL BE "SOMEWHERE BETWEEN TWO."

4. PREDICTABLY BASQUE ISSUE TOOK UP CONSIDERABLE TIME. KING EXPLAINED AGAIN THAT SPAIN IS TROUBLED BY BASQUE CAPACITY TO USE FRANCE VIRTUALLY AS A HINTERLAND. FRENCH DID THEIR UTMOST TO PROMISE CONTINUED COOPERATION WITHIN LIMITS IMPOSED BY LEGAL SYSTEM, POLICE CAPACITIES AND DOMESTIC POLITICS.

5. THE REALLY MAJOR ISSUE DISCUSSED WAS SPAIN'S ADHERENCE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY. GISCARD EXPLAINED THE OBVIOUS PROBLEMS WHICH ADHERENCE WOULD POSE FOR AGRICULTURE IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE AND THAT, IN ANY CASE, THE SPANISH DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS WOULD TAKE TIME ALSO. AT SAME TIME GISCARD GAVE KING ASSURANCE THAT FRANCE WOULD SUPPORT SPANISH MEMBERSHIP WHEN TIME WAS RIPE, WHICH, ELYSEE AND SPANISH EMBASSY SOURCE AGREE, IS TO BE AFTER THE FRENCH LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS IN 1978. IN INTERIM PROBLEMS ARE TO BE WORKED ON AND STUDIED FURTHER. OUR ELYSEE CONTACT LEFT NO DOUBT THAT BASIC CONSIDERATION WAS THAT, WHILE PROFOUNDLY SYMPATHETIC, GISCARD DID NOT WANT TO ADD BURDEN OF THIS ADDITIONAL QUESTION TO HIS OWN INTERNAL AGENDA AT THIS TIME.

6. FINALLY, AGREEMENT WAS REACHED ON MORE FREQUENT POLITICAL CONTACTS. BOTH DE GUIRINGAUD AND BARRE ARE THEREFORE LIKELY TO VISIT SPAIN IN COMING YEAR.

7. AS FOR VISIT ITSELF, WE CAN ADD LITTLE TO EXTENSIVE NEWSPAPER REPORTING. CLEARLY IT WAS MAJOR TECHNICAL AND TO EXTENT PSYCHOLOGICAL SUCCESS. IT WAS EQUALLY CLEAR FROM VAST SECURITY PRECAUTIONS, EXTRAORDINARY EVEN FOR FRANCE, THAT NO CHANCES WERE BEING TAKEN WITH KING'S

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SAFETY, EVEN THOUGH GISCARD HAD ORIGINALLY HOPED FOR MUCH MORE OPEN AND POPULAR PROGRAM. THIS WAS EVIDENCED AS WELL BY CHANGES IN PLANS, EVEN DURING VISIT, TO AVOID EVEN POSSIBILITY OF HOSTILE DEMONSTRATIONS. ELYSEE SOURCE CONCLUDED THAT ON THIS LEVEL VISIT FULLY MET ITS OBJECTIVE OF PRESENTING SPAIN TO FRANCE, AND TO EUROPE, AS AN EMERGING PARTNER.

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